SUBJECTS.

II. *Law, Justice and Police.*

15. *Changes in the Marumakkathayom law and the appointment of Commission to enquire into system of inheritance.*

Mr. K. Krishnan Pandalai (Member, Quilon Taluk) presented a memorial signed by the representatives of the Assembly following the Marumakkathayom system of inheritance and requested that a commission might be appointed, composed of Marumakkathayom gentlemen, to enquire into the present working of that system of inheritance in view to legislation.

The following changes in the Marumakkathayom law were also proposed:—

(*a*) the necessity for the Karanavan to keep accounts of income and expenditure of the Tarawad; (*b*) the right of junior members to have access to the accounts; (*c*) no decree should bind the Tarawad unless all the adult members thereof are made parties; (*d*) sales and mortgages should be upon the written consent of all the adult members; (*e*) in suits affecting Tarawad interests, all the adult members to be impleaded; (*f*) complete power of bequest to be given to Marumakkathayees over their self-acquisitions; (*g*) the self-acquisition of a Marumakkathayee dying intestate should go to his wife and children; (*h*) in suits by junior members questioning the validity of Tarawad debts, the creditors should not only prove consideration but also Tarawad necessity; and (*i*) Tarawads related to one another more remotely than through a common grandmother be given the right for a division of property.

Dewan's reply.—The whole question will be referred to a small committee for investigation and report. The committee will be instructed to formulate definite proposals if they consider any legislation necessary.

16. *Legislation regarding inheritance among Native and Syrian Christians.*

Mr. R. V. Kulandasamy Pillai (Member, Catholic Indian Association, Trivandrum) requested that the disabilities of Hindu converts to Christianity in the matter of inheritance should be removed and such legislation passed as would enable them to enjoy their property, as well as any other subject of the State. In British India, such disabilities had been removed, and in this country where religious toleration and freedom of convenience were being allowed, the existing state of things appeared to be an anomaly. At the last session of the Assembly, Government referred to the difficulties which beset interference in matters of inheritance; and the member said that it could not be the intention of a liberal Government like theirs to allow one portion of the population of His Highness to suffer, merely because there were difficulties in the way of removing their grievances and improving their lot.

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Mr. T. C. Cheriyan (Member, Travancore and Cochin Christian Association, Kottayam) prayed for the appointment of a commission, consisting of members of the different sections of the Christian community to enquire into and report on the system of inheritance obtaining among them in view to a law being eventually passed on the subject. In regard to the diversity in the general law applicable to all Christians, referred to in the Dewan's reply in the previous year, he said that the diversity alleged to exist was not very vital and that if a commission be appointed, it was not unlikely that a *modus vivendi* might be found which would satisfy all the classes. It was not desirable that, in a State of such limited dimensions, with so many creeds and classes, the minor differences in the system of inheritance should be perpetuated by the legislature. The member added that his Association was of opinion that a uniform code was possible and desirable.

Mr. C. Mathew (Member, Kartigapalli Taluk) supported the representation.

Dewan's reply.—While in the case of the Nayars, the spokesmen of that community have made definite suggestions, which constitute a ground for Government to go upon and enquire into; in regard to the Christians, we have only the suggestion that *if* a Committee be appointed, perchance they *may* be able to find out some matters on which legislation *may* be necessary. No definite proposals have been put forward. Government cannot appoint a committee for a vague purpose. Government sympathise with the wishes of any community in matters of this kind, but you should consult one another and come to some understanding in regard to a few matters at least, in regard to which all the different sects agree and then Government will go to your help. As matters now stand, Government will not be justified in appointing a committee and I have to repeat the same answer that was given from this place last year, *viz.*, that the community must first settle for themselves, at least in a general way, what they want.

17. *Acquisition by Government of Jenmis' rights over their lands and settlement of Kudiyans' liabilities on equitable basis.*

Mr. T. R. Narayana Pillai (Member, Ettumanur Taluk) said that Kudiyans were experiencing much suffering at the hands of the Jenmis; that the existing Regulation V of 1071 has not defined clearly the rights and liabilities of either party nor has it recorded the custom of the country in regard to the proprietory dues payable to the Jenmis; that, in consequence, the Jenmis were exacting numerous dues on various pretexts; that section 8 of the Regulation was hard and unjust; that while enhanced pattom

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